UNITED NATIONS **ST**

Secretariat

ST/SGB/1997/10
15 September 1997

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S BULLETIN

ORGANIZATION OF THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

The Secretary-General, pursuant to Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/5, entitled "Organization of the Secretariat of the United Nations", and for the purpose of establishing the organizational structure of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,[1] promulgates the following:

Section 1

General provision

The present bulletin shall apply in conjunction with Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/5, entitled "Organization of the Secretariat of the United Nations".

[1] The mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights derives from Articles 1, 13 and 55 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, held at Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, and subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/121 of 20 December 1993, and Assembly resolution 48/141, also of 20 December 1993, by which the Assembly established the post of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. In connection with the programme for reform of the United Nations (A/51/950, para. 79), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Centre for Human Rights are now being consolidated into a single Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

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Section 2

Functions and organization

2.1 The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights:

(a) Promotes universal enjoyment of all human rights by giving practical effect to the will and resolve of the world community as expressed by the United Nations;

(b) Plays the leading role on human rights issues and emphasizes the importance of human rights at the international and national levels;

(c) Promotes international cooperation for human rights;

(d) Stimulates and coordinates action for human rights throughout the United Nations system;

(e) Promotes universal ratification and implementation of international standards;

(f) Assists in the development of new norms;

(g) Supports human rights organs and treaty monitoring bodies;

(h) Responds to serious violations of human rights;

(i) Undertakes preventive human rights action;

(j) Promotes the establishment of national human rights infrastructures;

(k) Undertakes human rights field activities and operations;

(l) Provides education, information advisory services and technical assistance in the field of human rights.

2.2 The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is divided into organizational units, as described in the present bulletin.

2.3 The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is headed by a High Commissioner with the rank of Under-Secretary-General. The High Commissioner and the officials in charge of each organizational unit, in addition to the specific functions set out in the present bulletin, perform the general functions applicable to their positions, as set out in Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/5.

Section 3

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (Under-Secretary-General)

3.1 The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is accountable to the Secretary-General.

3.2 The High Commissioner is responsible for all the activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as for its administration, and carries out the functions specifically assigned to him or her by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/141 of 20 December 1993 and subsequent resolutions of policy-making bodies; advises the Secretary-General on the policies of the United Nations in the area of human rights; ensures that substantive and administrative support is given to the projects, activities, organs and bodies of the human rights programme; represents the Secretary-General at meetings of human rights organs and at other human rights events; and carries out special assignments as decided by the Secretary-General.

Section 4

Deputy to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (Assistant Secretary-General)

4.1 The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in the performance of his or her activities, is assisted by a Deputy to the High Commissioner who acts as Officer-in-Charge during the absence of the High Commissioner. In addition, the Deputy to the High Commissioner carries out specific substantive and administrative assignments as decided by the High Commissioner.

4.2 The Deputy is accountable to the High Commissioner.

Section 5

Staff Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

5.1 The Staff Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is headed by a Chief who is accountable to the High Commissioner.

5.2 The core functions of the Staff Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights are as follows:

(a) Assisting the High Commissioner in the overall direction and supervision of the activities of the human rights programme;

(b) Assisting the High Commissioner in the formulation, communication, implementation and evaluation of policies, practices and activities for the promotion and protection of human rights;

(c) Assisting the High Commissioner in maintaining relations with Governments, other United Nations agencies and entities, international organizations, regional and national institutions, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and academia;

(d) Assisting the High Commissioner in maintaining liaison on policy matters with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and other relevant offices at Headquarters, as well as with the spokespersons of the Secretary-General at New York and Geneva and the media;

(e) Carrying out fund-raising functions and special projects as assigned by the High Commissioner;

(f) Assisting the High Commissioner in developing and maintaining a framework for the management and planning of the activities of the human rights programme and facilitating the development of the overall work programme, and in preparing annual management reports on activities and achievements;

(g) Representing the High Commissioner at meetings and making statements on his or her behalf.

Section 6

Administrative Section

6.1 The Administrative Section is headed by a Chief who is accountable to the High Commissioner.

6.2 The core functions of the Administrative Section, in addition to those set out in section 7 of Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/5, are as follows:

(a) Advising the High Commissioner on the budgetary, financial and personnel matters relating to the human rights programme;

(b) Assisting the High Commissioner and appropriate staff in the discharge of their financial, personnel and general administrative responsibilities and administering the associate expert and internship programmes.

Section 7

New York Office

7.1 The New York Office is headed by a Director who is accountable to the High Commissioner.

7.2 The core functions of the New York Office are as follows:

(a) Representing the High Commissioner at Headquarters, at meetings of policy-making bodies, with permanent missions of Member States, at

interdepartmental and inter-agency meetings, with non-governmental organizations and professional groups, at academic conferences and with the media;

(b) Providing policy advice and recommendations on substantive matters to the High Commissioner;

(c) Supplying information and advice on human rights to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General;

(d) Providing substantive support on human rights issues to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other policy-making bodies established in New York;

(e) Providing materials and information to the permanent missions, United Nations departments, agencies and programmes, non-governmental organizations, the media and others regarding the human rights programme;

(f) Providing support to the High Commissioner and other officials, and to special rapporteurs and representatives when on mission in New York;

(g) Undertaking other specific assignments as decided by the High Commissioner.

Section 8

Research and Right to Development Branch

8.1 The Research and Right to Development Branch is headed by a Chief who is accountable to the High Commissioner.

8.2 The core functions of the Research and Right to Development Branch are as follows:

(a) Promoting and protecting the right to development, in particular by:

(i) Supporting intergovernmental groups of experts on the preparation of the strategy for the right to development;

(ii) Assisting in the analysis of the voluntary reports by States to the High Commissioner on the progress and steps taken for the realization of the right to development and on obstacles encountered;

(iii) Carrying out research projects on the right to development and preparing substantive outputs for submission to the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and treaty bodies;

(iv) Assisting in the substantive preparation of advisory service projects and educational material on the right to development;

(v) Providing substantive analysis and support to the High Commissioner in his or her mandate to enhance system-wide support for the right to development;

(b) Carrying out substantive research projects on the whole range of human rights issues of interest to United Nations human rights bodies in accordance with the priorities established by the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action and resolutions of policy-making bodies;

(c) Providing substantive services to human rights organs engaged in standard-setting activities;

(d) Preparing documents, reports or draft reports, summaries and synthesis and position papers in response to particular requests, as well as substantive contributions to information materials and publications;

(e) Providing policy analysis, advice and guidance on substantive procedures;

(f) Managing the information services of the human rights programme, including the documentation centre and library, enquiry services and the human rights databases;

(g) Preparing studies on relevant articles of the Charter of the United Nations for the Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs.

Section 9

Support Services Branch

9.1 The Support Services Branch is headed by a Chief who is accountable to the High Commissioner.

9.2 The core functions of the Support Services Branch are as follows:

(a) Planning, preparing and servicing sessions/meetings of the Commission on Human Rights, the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and related working groups and of the committees established by human rights treaty bodies and their working groups;

(b) Ensuring that substantive support is provided in a timely manner to the human rights treaty body concerned, drawing on the appropriate resources of the human rights programme;

(c) Preparing state party reports for review by the treaty body concerned and following up on decisions and recommendations;

(d) Preparing or coordinating the preparation and submission of all substantive and other documents and the support from other management units to the activities of treaty bodies serviced, and following up on decisions taken at meetings of those bodies;

(e) Planning, preparing and servicing sessions of boards of trustees of the following voluntary funds: United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, United Nations Voluntary Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations and United Nations Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, and implementing relevant decisions;

(f) Processing communications submitted to treaty bodies under optional procedures and communications under the procedures established by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1503 (XLVIII) of 27 May 1970 and ensuring follow-up.

Section 10

Activities and Programmes Branch

10.1 The Activities and Programmes Branch is headed by a Chief who is accountable to the High Commissioner.

10.2 The core functions of the Activities and Programmes Branch are as follows:

(a) Developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating advisory services and technical assistance projects at the request of Governments;

(b) Managing the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights;

(c) Implementing the Plan of Action of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, including the development of information and educational materials;

(d) Providing substantive and administrative support to human rights fact-finding and investigatory mechanisms, such as special rapporteurs, representatives and experts and working groups mandated by the Commission on Human Rights and/or the Economic and Social Council to deal with specific country situations or phenomena of human rights violations worldwide, as well as the General Assembly's Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories;

(e) Planning, supporting and evaluating human rights field presences and missions, including the formulation and development of best practice, procedural methodology and models for all human rights activities in the field;

(f) Managing voluntary funds for human rights field presences.

Section 11

Final provisions

11.1 The present bulletin shall enter into force on 15 September 1997.

11.2 Secretary-General's bulletin of 21 July 1993, entitled "Centre for Human Rights" (ST/SGB/Organization, Section CHR), is hereby abolished.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN
Secretary-General